IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 A method for making a promotional offer by a seller to a customer in a point-of-sale (POS) outlet, the method comprising the steps of:

recognizing the customer as being present in the POS outlet;

determining an identity of the recognized customer;

selecting the promotional offer from an offer inventory, the offer inventory including at least one of a product offer and a service offer of the seller; and

presenting the promotional offer to the customer while the customer is present in the POS outlet;

wherein the promotional offer is selected based on at least one characteristic associated with the customer identity.

Claim 2 The method of claim 1, wherein the customer identity is determined using individual identification means coupled to a customer database.

Claim 3 The method of claim 2, wherein the individual identification means is selected from the group consisting of image recognition means, voice recognition means, and card recognition means.

Claim 4 The method of claim 3, wherein the card recognition means recognizes at least one of credit cards and identification badges.

Claim 5 The method of claim 2, wherein the customer identity includes an individual customer identity.

Claim 6 The method of claim 2, wherein the customer identity includes at least one of a plurality of predetermined customer groups.

Claim 7 The method of claim 6, wherein the plurality of predetermined customer groups are defined according to at least one of product types offered by the seller, service types offered by the seller, purchase levels of the customer and other customers, purchase frequencies of the customer and the other customers, and term of relationship between seller and customer and seller and other customers.

Claim 8 The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of retrieving customer information associated with the customer identity from the database.

Claim 9 The method of claim 8, wherein the retrieved customer information includes at least one of customer purchase information and customer interest information.

Claim 9 The method of claim 8, wherein the at least one identified characteristic is determined based on the retrieved customer information.

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Claim 10 The method of claim 9, wherein the at least one identified characteristic is determined based on customer information relating to activities undertaken by the customer in the POS outlet.

Claim 11 The method of claim 10, wherein the customer information relates to at least one of areas of the POS outlet visited by the customer and purchases made in the POS outlet by the customer.

Claim 12 The method of claim 10, wherein the customer information relating to activities undertaken by the customer in the POS outlet is stored in the customer database.

Claim 13 The method of claim 8, wherein the selecting step further comprises step of:

evaluating a plurality of promotional offers in the inventory as a function of an offer cost and an anticipated return on investment (ROI).

Claim 14 The method of claim 13, wherein the anticipated ROI is evaluated based on the retrieved customer information.

Claim 15 The method of claim 8, wherein the retrieved customer information includes information indicating one or more preferred offer presentation modes of the customer.

Claim 16 The method of claim 15, wherein the preferred offer presentation modes are selected from the group consisting of offer presentations by a POS outlet host, offer

presentations made by in-outlet electronic means and offer presentations made electronically via personal electronic means.

Claim 17 The method of claim 16, wherein the in-outlet electronic means are selected from the group including kiosks, interactive product displays and electronic signage.

Claim 18 The method of claim 16, wherein the personal electronic means is selected from the group including pagers, personal digital assistants, and cellular telephones.

Claim 19 The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of tracking interactions between the customer and the seller occurring subsequent to the presenting step.

Claim 20 The method of claim 19, wherein the interactions tracked include at least one of product sales between the seller and the customer and service sales between the seller and the customer.

Claim 21 The method of claim 19, wherein customer information relating to the tracked interactions is store in the customer database.

Claim 22 The method of claim 19, wherein the promotional offer is evaluated as a function of customer information relating to the tracked interactions.

Claim 23 The method of claim 19, wherein the subsequent interactions tracked include interactions between the customer and the seller occurring in the POS outlet following the presenting step.

Claim 24 The method of claim 16, wherein an offer presentation mode is selected as a function of customer interests and needs, said mode selected to be optimal as to an anticipated return on investment (ROI) and an associated cost.